# WHAT IS CLINICAL RESEARCH?

## Clinical research aims to find new ways of preventing, diagnosing, and treating disease and illness.

### With the help of volunteer participants, clinical research leads to new and improved:

**Medications, vaccines, therapies and treatments**

**Medical tests, procedures and practices**

**Medical tools, equipment and devices**

**Scientific knowledge and understanding of illness and disease**

### This type of research addresses a wide range of challenges, such as:

What types of health behaviours (such as diet, exercise, and sleep habits) lead to increased risk for certain diseases—even in childhood?

How can we ensure that organ transplants last as long as possible and that transplant recipients stay as healthy as possible?

Could video games and online puzzles improve rehabilitation programs?

What if patients helped design mental health supports? Could it enrich standards of care?

Would something new (such as a medication, surgery technique, therapy, medical device, procedure, or post-care program) work better than what is currently available for patients?

Do medications or drug interactions have different effects in men, women, and gender diverse people?

## What does clinical research look like?

## THERE ARE TWO MAIN TYPES OF CLINICAL RESEARCH:

### OBSERVATIONAL STUDIES

In observational studies, researchers use questionnaires and medical tests to collect and analyze data about patients' health, habits and behaviours, biology, bodily functions and changes, and more. This helps researchers better understand the factors that contribute to health or disease.

### CLINICAL TRIALS

In clinical trials, researchers test a new intervention – like a vaccine, medical device, or health program – and compare the results with a placebo group (i.e., a group that did not receive the intervention). This helps researchers determine whether the new intervention is safe and (more) effective for patients.

Learn more at: www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/clinical.html